

THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF SPEECH: A COMPARATIVE LINGUO-CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF PUNJABI AND AFRICAN PROVERBS

Lubna Akhlaq Khan & Muhammad Safeer Awan

Abstract

This cross-cultural research began with an assumption that a culture's proverbs can give an insight into its certain ideologies, preferences and a code of conduct. The focus of the present study is a selection of speech-related proverbs from Punjabi and Nigerian cultures. The theoretical framework is provided by the Linguo-Cultural Approach (Petrova, 2019). Dictionaries of proverbs (Bajwa, 2011; Owomyela, 2005) were used to solicit all the proverbs related to the semantic domain of speech. Thematic categories were developed according to the 'culturemes' found in the proverbs either literally or metaphorically. The study confirmed the hypothesis by Fischer & Yoshida (1968) that the population density of a speech community affects the positive or negative attitude towards speech. Punjabi proverbs have created an overall image of the preference for silence, restraint, contemplation, and indirectness, while the Nigerian corpus delineated a preference for speech, directness, and clarity. In both languages boasting, exaggerating, interrupting, proud talk, bitter expressions and backbiting are strongly deterred. Actual performance is preferred to empty/tall claims in both cultures. Overall, Yoruba proverbs, as compared to their Punjabi counterparts, have delineated a positive view of speech and a negative view of silence. Further research can be done to seek for the prospective reasons for these similarities and differences found in the proverbs of two regionally distant cultures.

Keywords: Folk wisdom, Cultures, Speech, Punjabi, African, Proverbs

1. Introduction

Language and culture are inherently interwoven and shape each other. Proverbs, “sapient nuggets” are a significant piece of a language as well as a window through which one can watch the social qualities, convictions, and inclinations of a speech community (Xiangyang, 2016, p. 36). Osoba (2014) studied the functions and importance of proverbs in Yoruba linguo-culture, and Khan (2014) investigated Pakistani proverbs from similar perspectives. They identified two significant roles performed by proverbs in the respective communities. Educational role: the people rely on proverbs as one of the means of preserving their culture and educating their youth on their religious belief, tradition, philosophy and moral; Rhetorical role: to win an argument, establish a fact, settle disputes, express sympathy, caution or warning or entertain. It is noteworthy that one proverb may perform more than one function. Much the same as other potential areas of human activity, proverbs about the notion of speech practices of a given culture may help an emic as well as an etic researcher to accomplish a practically intensive comprehension of the social inclinations. These cultural capsules may likewise guide towards the best possible standards to be adopted while communicating as well as specific norms to be maintained to augment the level of social acknowledgement of verbal conduct (Khan, Aziz, & Hussain, 2018). However, Moreno discussed the absence of proverbs in a particular linguo-culture, “the fact that a language lacks a proverb to represent certain attitudes and situations does not imply that such attitudes do not exist in the respective culture. Rather, it simply indicates that in some other culture, people are more concerned with them” (2005, p. 43).

Certain investigators have examined Korean, Japanese, Indian, Sudanese, Igbo and Anglo-American proverbs to investigate the idea of speech as portrayed in these 'cultural nuggets' (Ali & Khan, 2012; Khan & Awan, 2019); however, no critical study could be encountered which analyzed either Punjabi or Nigerian adages separately or comparatively. The present investigation will attempt to bridge this gap through a comparative linguo-cultural analysis of important speech related proverbs in these two cultures: Punjabi and Nigeria (Yoruba). The rationale to choose Nigerian proverbs is to avoid “Golton’s problem that cultural traits are often non-randomly distributed because of the individual or combined effects of common history, diffusion, borrowing, and other types of cultural transmission processes” (Dow, 2007, p. 340). Choosing regionally distant (African and Asian) cultures while conducting cross-cultural research will avoid such problems of transmission.

Secondly, both cultures share similar traditional, oral, post-colonial and under-developed socio-cultural and historical traits, so they are deemed fit for a cross-cultural analysis through proverbs (Mieder, 2004). The present research aims to explore the nature of speech in Punjabi and Nigerian (Yoruba) proverbs from a comparative linguo-cultural perspective and to determine the nature of similarities and differences in both the corpora.

1. Literature Review

The review of the related literature identified several studies starting from the second half of the 20th century, including research done in Japanese, Indian, American, Sudanese, Korean, and cross-cultural contexts. Some brief glimpses of these studies are discussed below:

In a 1968 article, Fischer and Yoshida proposed that in a sparsely settled society where people see a few of their fellows in regular day to day existence proverbs about speech would be substantially more positive than they are in Japan. They discovered that “the most ubiquitous lesson about speech in Japanese proverbs may be communicated as ‘shut up’” (p. 40). In other words, the precepts stress the threats of talking, caution against speaking or express doubt about speech practices.

McNeil (1971) published an investigation regarding Indian proverbs. India is also a very crowded community, however, not as densely populated as Japan. Unlike Fischer and Yoshida's speculation concerning those aspects of culture, McNeil limited his contention to a great extent to the statistic factor. McNeil reasoned that the general demeanour toward discourse in Indian proverbs is more favourable than that of the Japanese examples.

Furthermore, in an investigation of Korean attitudes toward discourse, Chung-Ho (1985) noticed that proverbs portray speech negatively. This is not the situation for every single Korean precept, yet it is the prevailing message of the proverbs. However, the researcher, Chung-Ho, did not tie his discoveries with the demographic characteristics of Korean society.

In another study about speech in the Anglo-American context, De Caro (1987) observed their proverbs to be strongly hostile to discourse, although American proverbs are not as significantly consistent in this attitude as are, clearly, Japanese ones. Norrick (1997) examined De Caro's arrangement given in the initial segment of his article; however, his objective contrasts, particularly to De Caro's

objective. He noted proverbial entries which showed up in the accumulations under the catchphrases: 'Speech, language, tongue, word, and talk' in Mieder (1994) and contrasted them with the collections cited in De Caro (1987). He isolated his thematic groups from one another and indicated how they yield a complex, but a genuinely steady positive perspective on speech and talk.

The Nigerian (Igbo) proverbs about speech have been broken down by Opatá (1992) who fortified the 'population density and speech disposition' theory of Fischer and Yoshida by inferring that Igbo adages are inherently positive towards discourse and negative towards intemperate quietness. Talking is unequivocally favoured over quietness.

Chong (2001) endeavored to arrange and dissect proverbs about 'silence' and 'talk' from 16 different languages gathered through the World Wide Web. She concluded from her investigation that proverbs identified with speech and silence could likewise be arranged into different sub-categories, for example, "speaker-focused, listener centred, positive and negative metaphors" (p. 189). She additionally included the category 'gender' to investigate if a woman is identified with talk or silence.

A contrastive investigation of Sudanese and English proverbs while utilizing ethnographic procedures proposed by Hymes (1962) is carried out by Ahmed (2005) to draw out the significance of Sudanese and English proverbs from their specific settings of use. The findings have astounding similitudes with the thematic propensities found in Punjabi proverbs about a cautious view of talk. However, Sudanese precepts, in opposition to their Punjabi, but like their Nigerian counterparts, have accentuated straight talk as opposed to backhanded articulations. Multiple studies in Punjabi and Pakistani context focused on gender in different folklore genres but their main domain did not encompass speech or communication (Khan & Anwar, 2016; Khan & Ateeq, 2017; Khan, Mustafa, & Ali, 2017; Khan, Aziz, & Hussain, 2018).

The overview of the available research has uncovered that no analytical work has been done on speech, talk, and silence related to Punjabi or Nigerian (Yoruba) proverbs either individually or comparatively. Henceforth, the present study will endeavour to fill this gap.

2. Methodology

The Linguo-Culturology Approach proposed by Petrova in various works (2003, 2014, 2016, 2019) has been adapted for the cultural examination of the proverbial repertoire from both the speech communities. This methodology diminishes the proverb to the one single significant substance, which it remarks and evaluates as positive or negative. It further relates this social element to an immediate urge to do something by the message. Petrova has named this positive or negative social substance a 'cultureme'. A mental question can help, "What does this text show as positive or negative?" Elucidating the metaphorical proverbs by giving their definition is the fundamental step that the researcher should take to elucidate the proverbial 'cultureme' and message. To discover what the message is, the researcher has to put another inquiry to the text 'What does this proverb encourage us to do/to be, or not to do/not to be?' This approach relies on the 'semantic density' (frequency of occurrences) of different positive or negative "culturemes". It requires a thorough, corpus-driven, objective and authentic portrayal of the hierarchy of the positively and negatively assessing entries describing the linguo-culture/s under scrutiny.

Collections of proverbs from both the languages (Punjabi [Bajwa, 2011] and Yoruba [Owomoyela, 2005]) are used to elicit (87 Punjabi and 71 Yoruba) proverbs identified within the semantic domain of speech, including the words: *speech, words, tongue, mouth, quiet, intrude, and articulation*. The Nigerian (Yoruba) collection provided the proverbs with English interpretations and clarifications. In contrast, the Punjabi proverbs have been categorized, deciphered and translated by the researcher using the strategies proposed by Khan (2014) with the assistance of a local speaker having official experience of translation. Besides, research informants from both the cultures have been consulted to check the 'vitality' and 'reliability' of the translation deduced from the chosen proverbs. Thematic content analysis is led to create topical classifications and sub-categories and to reach the core/'cultureme' of the proverbs (Petrova, 2016). The numbers referenced within brackets against each of the headings imply the number of proverbs, recognized in the corpus, sustaining the weightiness of the idea conveyed through the 'semantic density'. Furthermore, figures about the 'population density' of both the countries have been checked (List of countries by population density, 2019) to verify if there is a correlation between the dominant attitude towards speech and the population density of both the countries.

3. Data Analysis of Punjabi proverbs

Following are the dominant Punjabi 'culturemes' about the nature of speech arranged based on the highest frequency:

a. Loquacity (15)

1. *Oona hoya kherr kherr bolay, bherya kadi na bolay* (Bajwa, 2011, p. 309). Only a half-filled vessel makes much noise; the filled one will never do so.
2. *Lammi jeebh tay cheti moat* (p. 324). A long tongue (being too talkative) will cause an earlier death of the speaker.
Cult. Talk (-) *adv.* Don't talk much.

Explanation: Being loud-mouthed is related to the attributes of being foolhardy in the most frequent 'cultureme' which is encouraging to maintain a strategic distance from garrulity. The English adage "Empty vessels make loud sounds" (De Caro, 1987, p. 20) has numerous partners in Punjabi too.

b. Negative power (13)

1. *Gul akhdi ay toon menu moonho kadh, main tenu pindon kadhan gi* (p. 36). Words can force the speaker to leave the town.
2. *Jay ikk bol Shah Mansoor na bolda tay sooli kiun charhda?* (p. 157) Your words can ruin your life.
Cult. Talk (-) *adv.* Be cautious.

Explanation: This noteworthy 'cultureme' is about the negative power of words and talk. The reference to Shah Mansur's case 'I am God' is utilized to discover the significance of words articulated without taking results into account. Also, when articulated, the words get free of the control of the speaker and will be misrepresented to be abused.

c. Irreversibility/longevity (11)

1. *Teer kamano gul zabano nhi murrdi* (p. 207) Words like an arrow, once said cannot be taken back.
Cult. Talk (-) *adv.* Words are irreversible, so be careful.
2. *Banda nhi rehnda banday di gul rehj andi ay* (p. 86) People die, words will never. *Cult.* Talk (-) *adv.* Words survive longer than the speaker, so be careful.

Explanation: These precepts feature the irreversibility and life span of expressed words. Different colloquialisms are focusing on the sturdiness and

lastingness of the verbally expressed words; henceforth one ought to be incredibly careful before talking.

d. Words are powerful (10)

1. *Nokri di jurr zaban utay way* (p. 463). Your job is based on your verbal behavior.
2. *Zaban ee raaj bithaway, tay zaban ee bheek mangaway* (p. 342). Your words can make you sit on the throne or make you a beggar.

Cult. Talk (+, -) *adv.* Be careful about words.

Explanation: The fourth most incessant 'cultureme' is about the power of words. The 'tongue' is given the agency to make the speaker a ruler or a homeless person, to cause him to sit on the elephant/horse or to lean back on the ground, to make individuals, friends or adversaries, to have their work done and targets accomplished, and to achieve raised and decent economic well-being.

e. Talk and Action (10)

1. *Khand khand akhyan moonh mitha nhi hunda* (p. 301) Talking about sugar does not make your mouth sweet.

Cult. Talk (-), Action (+) *adv.* Focus on performance.

Explanation: These precepts have set up a contrastive and aberrant connection between talk and performance, in which previous expansion may diminish the latter's effectiveness and the other way around.

f. Silence (8)

1. *Ikk chup 100 sukh* (p. 47). One silent moment guarantees hundreds of peaceful ones.
2. *Sau so jo chup* (p. 250). The quiet one is the wiser one.

Cult. Silence (+) *adv.* Keep quiet.

Explanation: These proverbs confirmed the propensity towards quietness in Punjabi culture. Being reticent is related to being shrewd. Quietness is likewise connotated with progress and attainability.

g. Think before you speak (6)

1. *Chith k khae, samajh alae, os nu khata kaday na ae* (p. 22). A person who thinks before speaking and chews before swallowing has never to repent.
2. *Soch karey so sugharr naar, ker sochay so koorr* (p. 251). A wise girl thinks before voicing, while an artless lady would think after speaking.

Cult. Talk (-) *adv.* Think before you speak

Explanation: Various Punjabi proverbs laid accentuation on the significance of intuition before talking. An individual who does not weigh his/her words before vocalizing them is named as a 'hoodwink' in these expressions.

h. Sweet talk (5)

1. *Jeebh raseelia pni, wery meet karey* (p. 159). The sweet language can turn your enemies into friends.
2. *Nermi nal Sunday v pasmai day nay* (p. 360). With softness, even a bull may be tamed. Softness may win impossible tasks.
Cult. Sweet talk *adv.* Be soft-spoken.

Explanation: Using sweet words is among the focused notions in Punjabi proverbs as a significant number of 'culturemes' are found in this category. Supernatural properties are attributed to sweet words to make the speaker socially and ethically so acceptable and respected that he can achieve even outlandish assignments such as winning the hearts of tough people.

i. Bitter talk (5)

1. *Talwar da phutt mil janda ay, zabaan da phutt nhi milda* (p. 128). A wound of the sword can be cured but not of words.
Cult. Talk (-) *adv.* Do not use bitter language.

Explanation: Contrary to sweet talk, bitter talk is discouraged as the wounds caused by such words are incurable.

j. Indirect talk (4)

1. *Burey nu v moonh tay bura nhi akhi da* (p. 81) Do not call a spade a spade.
Cult. Straight talk (-) *adv.* Do not damage the face through direct criticism.

Explanation: Do not involve in bald criticism. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory of saving face while interacting by keeping away from the bare analysis is strengthened here (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

The analysis of Punjabi proverbs showed a decidedly positive attitude toward silence and restraint and a negative attitude toward speech in favour of actual performance. Indirect and sweet talk is preferred over straightforward and bitter talk. Thinking before speaking out is encouraged contrary to abrupt talk.

4. Data Analysis of Nigerian (Yoruba) proverbs

This section will analyze the Nigerian speech-related proverbs in a descending order to indicate the emphasis laid on certain speech practices over others as contended by Petrova (2014) in the Linguo-Cultural Approach.

a. Speech is encouraged (16)

1. “*Àì-srńí ñmú ẹnu rùn*” (“It is abstention from speaking that makes the mouth smell”) (p. 114).
2. “*Àilẹ̀fòhùn ní ñsájú orí burúkú*” “Inability to speak out precedes misfortunes” (p. 162).
3. “*A kì í fì itijú kárùn*” (“Never be too shy to speak out on your own behalf”) (p. 103).

Cult. Talk (+) *adv.* Necessary speaking must be done.

Explanation: These Yoruba proverbs underscore the importance of talking your heart out at suitable times as staying silent in those circumstances may result in a problem; consequently, where it is necessary, it is firmly prescribed.

b. Clarity is essential (13)

1. “*Egbtálá: bí a ò bálà á, kì í yéni*” (“*Egbtálá*: if one does not explain it, no one understands what it means”) (p. 257).
2. “*Mo kò ó’ kì í ẹ àìni àpẹ̀júwe*” (“One should say enough to make one’s message understood”) (p. 262).

Cult. Clarity (+) *adv.* Be unambiguous in your talk.

Explanation: These Yoruba proverbs explicitly articulate the need for making your discourse unambiguous. Speaking in enigmas or keeping up brevity at the expense of explanation of the proposed focuses is debilitated. The Gricean Maxims of Quantity and Manner are fortified here (Wilson and Sperber, 1981).

c. Direct talk (11)

1. “*ká sásò pé, ‘Ìwọ̀ Lámonrín, bọ̀ ní*” (“One should rather say, ‘You, so-and-so, you are a fool’”) (*Cult.* “Be confident enough to speak without hedging”) (p. 263).

2. “*Àwiyé nIfñf; gba-n-gba lOrò ñpèran*” (“Whatever one has to say, one should say without mincing words”) (p. 254).

Cult. Direct talk (+) *adv.* Don't be discreet.

Explanation: These Yoruba proverbs demonstrated an inclination for straight talk over tact, while an English proverb shows a comparable preference ('Call a spade a spade'). The Punjabi data uncovered an inclination for 'roundabout' articulation of disapproval or despising.

d. Appropriacy (9)

1. “*bi tí a ti ñjeun bí ikun bí ikun, a kì isr bìi klbbii klbnib*” (“Where one is eating food like mucus, one should not speak of matters like phlegm”) (p. 135).

Cult. Appropriacy (+) *adv.* Take care of appropriacy when talking.

2. “*Ìgbà ara là mbúra*” (“One swears when it is time to swear”) (p. 136).

Cult. Appropriacy (+) *adv.* Take care of appropriacy of the moment.

Explanation: These Yoruba proverbs included the component of 'appropriacy' and 'relatedness' to the acknowledged attributes of communication. Unequivocal notice is present of the befitting time, manner and subject when one thinks about voicing his/her feelings.

e. Sweet Words (7)

1. “*Oro pele yo obi lapo*” (“A good word takes kola nut from the pocket”) (p. 214).
2. “*Yi mi sébè, kinyí o sí póró oko*” (“To whatever attack you mount against me, I will respond in kind”) (p. 249).

Cult. Sweet talk (+) *adv.* Be kind to bitter talkers.

Explanation: These precepts are displaying the significance given to sweet words and the mysteriously beneficial outcomes of utilizing them that even an inconceivable errand can be performed with their help. These can enable you to make new companions and transform your enemies into your supporters.

f. Silence (5)

1. “*Okùnrin jẹ́jẹ́ bìwà-kunkun*” (“An easygoing man's gentle mien hides a strong disposition”) (p. 151).

Cult. Silence (-) *adv.* “Beware, the quiet type is often a tough customer.”

2. “*èrù máa dáké rọ́rọ sùgbón òní ẹnu bí ilù*” (“Silence is an attribute of the dead: he who is alive speaks”) (p. 163).

Cult. Silence (-) *adv.* Speak as it is an attribute of the alive.

Explanation: Silence is overall perceived as something negatively evaluated in these Yoruba proverbs. Yoruba people use these proverbs to express the fact that quiet people are always hard to convince. They believe that you will not know their hearts, so it is very difficult to satisfy them.

g. Bitter words (3)

1. “*Ptpt ris, a-ta-síni-lára-má-win*” (“Injury by spoken words cannot be healed”) (p. 207).
2. “*Enu àìmmu, ètè àìmètè, ní ìmú rànba rok*” (“A mouth that will not stay shut; lips that will not stay closed are what brings trouble to the cheeks”) (p. 134).

Cult. Bitter words (-) *Adv.* Be cautious.

Explanation: These proverbs refer to the debacle and destruction brought about by the indiscreet work of words that can lead to the demise of an individual. Not watching verbal restriction may turn into a reason for physical inconvenience and rebuke for the speaker.

h. Talk and Action (3)

1. “*A kì í gbé odò jiyàn-an oş hó tàbí kò hó*” (*Cult.* “Where the claim can be put to the test, the verbal argument is foolish”) (p. 104).
2. “*Tàbà tí ò dùn, ẹnu ò tà á*” (*Cult.* “No amount of talk will make something unpleasant become pleasant”) (p. 157).

Cult. Action (+) *adv.* Action is preferable to talk.

Explanation: These Yoruba proverbs built a case for performance against empty slogans, and the significance of genuine endeavours cannot be remunerated by any measure of expressions of tall claims.

i. Loquacity (2)

1. “*Ení bá sọ púp á sọ*” (“Whoever talks a lot will misspeak”) (p. 177).
2. “*rpúp ò kún agbn; ir ní ìmú wá*” (“A lot of words will not fill a basket; they will only lead to lies”) (p. 206).

Cult. Loquacity (-) *adv.* Do not talk much.

Explanation: Though a dominant message of Yoruba proverbs is positive towards speaking one's heart, these proverbs are cautioning against the traps one may fall into on account of garrulity. The Gricean Maxim of quantity to avoid too much verbosity is emphasized here (Wilson and Sperber, 1981).

j. Power of words (2)

1. “*r la fi ñje omito oro r*” (“It is with words that one resolves all problems”) (p. 155).
2. “*Gbóló hùn kan-án barj; gbóló hùn kan-án tún rse*” (“One solitary statement muddies an entire affair; one solitary statement clears all the confusion”) (p. 183).

Cult. Talk (+) *adv.* Be cautious while using words.

Explanation: The words in Yoruba proverbs are given an exceptional capacity to build just as to annihilate, to persuade or to confound, to make companions or to turn people against the speaker.

5. Discussion

The quantitatively as well as thematically categorized information of both the languages yielded specific cultural examples which, according to Petrova (2014, 2016, 2019), might be deciphered regarding the emphasis attached to a specific conduct or discourse practice in the relative societies. The higher number of proverbs strengthening a solitary thought might be a deciding variable to deduce the relative significance given to an idea or thought in the respective communities.

The population density of Pakistan (260.50 per sq. km) where Punjabi is the language of the more substantial part of the masses and Nigeria (215.07 per sq. km) (List of nations by population density, 2019) where Yoruba is a significant language, yielded positive outcomes in regards to the hypothesis exhibited by Fischer & Yoshida (1968). Punjabi proverbs, in general, demonstrated an inclination for quietness and restraint while the Nigerian proverbs have indicated positive view of speech combined with clarity which might be deciphered as lining up with the population density of the individual speech communities. In a densely settled community, all forms of open aggression must be strictly controlled if the community is to survive. Presumably, however, aggression cannot be entirely

suppressed, and the least damaging form in which to allow its partial expression would be verbal. Thus, one might expect a drive for verbal aggression in proportion to the control of other forms. However, even verbal aggression, if carried too far, is likely to escalate into more dangerous forms, and for this reason, must be kept within limits. Proverbs about speech are much more positive in a sparsely settled nomadic society, as in Yoruba community. There, individuals, perhaps, see a few of their fellows in everyday life and need to reassert social ties when they encounter people. This Nigerian positive affinity towards speech has additionally been contended by Opata (1992) by the data analysis of Igbo precepts, “a careful analysis of Igbo proverbs shows that the attitude to speech among the Igbo is decidedly positive. The majority of the Igbo data advocated the primacy of speech over non-speech” (p. 190).

While the Punjabi proverbial folklore is unique concerning the Nigerian one, it isn't diametrically contradicted to its partner, and there are numerous similarities as well (Khan & Awan, 2019). The Nigerian proverbs, though appearing positive toward speech (Opata, 1992), do set a point of confinement to it by endorsing the criteria of lucidity and discouraging useless talk, gloating, and belittling talk. There are times when restraint in discourse is exhorted simply, like the Punjabi precepts. Both positive and negative power of talk/speech is perceived in 'Words will secure you an elephant, and words will also bring you to the feet of an elephant' (McNeil, 1971, p. 9). Consequently, the Nigerian adages, as a group, likewise alert about how language is utilized, however without a doubt they perceive that discourse can be, and frequently is, utilized astutely and effectively and they highlight the positive.

In contrast to the Punjabi proverbs, Yoruba colloquialisms, much the same as Igbo proverbs, sees the individual who is unduly quiet as meriting doubt (Opata, 1992). An Indian study likewise exhibited 'discourse' in a negative light in “Silent cows are expert at eating refuse” (McNeil, 1971, p. 5). The Punjabi precepts infer that talk itself meddles with work, while the general Nigerian disposition is that only unreasonable talk ruins work. The Nigerian conviction that the discussion of specific individuals is particularly beneficial and merits articulation likewise contrasts with the Punjabi idea of talk.

The 'culturematic' investigation of 87 Punjabi proverbs on speech has uncovered that the most noteworthy semantic density (Petrova, 2014) is accomplished by 'loquacity' (15), followed by 'negative power of words' (13),

'irreversibility/longevity of words' (11), 'bilateral power of words' (10), 'Action is preferable to talk' (10), 'silence' (8), 'think before you speak' (5), 'sweet talk' (6), 'bitter talk' (5), and 'indirect talk' (4). On the other hand, in the Nigerian data, out of 71 proverbs, the highest semantic density is found in the proverbs where 'speech is encouraged' (16), followed by 'clear talk' (13), 'direct talk' (11) 'appropriate talk' (9), 'sweet words' (7), 'silence' (5), 'bitter words' (3), 'preference of action over talk' (3) and 'power of words to perform actions' (2).

As the frequency of occurrence and semantic density revealed through the culturematic analysis uncovered the taken for granted inclination towards speech in Nigerian data, so is the propensity towards restraint, silence and contemplation in Punjabi corpus. A great emphasis is put on the power and organization of words/talk, cautioning against the useless utilization of words and to be careful while communicating. The two other main characteristics of talk/words are 'irreversibility' and 'longevity'. The actual performance is preferred to ineffective talk while quietness has been related to harmony, astuteness, and achievement. The Japanese thought that discussion itself meddles with work (Fischer and Yoshida, 1968) is likewise found in both the linguo-cultures under scrutiny. Furthermore, the Nigerian proverbs have a similar tendency as indicated by the Indian proverb, 'It is not talking, but merely an excessive amount of talking that hinders work' (McNeil, 1971. p.5).

Then again, the Nigerian data and its culturematic investigation uncovered different stress patterns laid on distinctive discourse practices. The availability of comparative 'culturemes' (as in the Punjabi corpus) recognized in 71 Yoruba (Owomyela, 2005) proverbs revealed inclination given to 'talk over silence' (16), 'need to be clear and unambiguous' (13), 'direct talk' (11) 'need to take care of appropriacy of time and manner' (9), 'sweet words' (7), silence (5), 'bitter words' (3), 'action over talk' (3), 'loquacity' (2), and 'power of words' (2). The comparative analysis of both the linguo-cultures through their proverbs confirmed the discoveries by Chong-Ho (1985). She led a cross-cultural investigation of speech-related proverbs from 16 different languages regarding the availability of proverbs strengthening comparative thoughts and ideas; however, with a difference of accentuation (Petrova, 2016).

The following classes of 'culturemes' evoked in Punjabi proverbs incorporate the counsel to 'think before you talk' and stay away from 'unpleasant words'. The by and large relentless accentuation on quietness, restraint, consideration before

articulating words, keeping away from bitter words have confirmed the theory introduced by Fischer & Yoshida (1968), McNeil (1971), and De Caro (1987). The population density of a discourse community seems to be a deciding variable for the disposition toward speech (empowering or disheartening) as depicted through the uplifting demeanour toward speech in the Yoruba and Igbo proverbs (Opata, 1992; Owomyela, 2005; Petrova, 2016).

On the other hand, the principal distinction between the two linguo-cultures is the dominance of different Yoruba proverbs urging to talk one's heart out, looking for lucidity and appropriacy. In contrast, no Punjabi proverb exhibited this valuation for speech other than the ones educating 'control'. It is a reiterated topic in both the languages yet more accentuation is placed in the Yoruba precepts on keeping up harmony among talk and silence. In the words of Taylor, "[t]he most striking trait in the ethics of proverbs is the adherence to the middle way" (1931, p. 78). Norrick's (1997) contention perfectly summarises the conclusive findings inferred from the Punjabi corpus, "[g]iven their adherence to this middle way we might expect that proverbs represent language as a tool to be used in achieving reasonable goals. They advise us to say neither too much nor too little, to speak truly and rationally, and to speak only good and for good purposes" (p. 280).

Another distinction is the exhortation in Yoruba proverbs to either disregard or give a delicate answer to a presumptuous individual, "To whatever assault you mount against me, I will react in kind" (McNeil, 1971, p. 249). An Indian proverb has additionally informed a similar procedure concerning answering a dupe, 'Answer the unmindful with quietness' (p. 9). The Punjabi adages have strengthened the possibility of 'one good turn deserves another' through ("Do not utter bad words, you won't be called bad") (Bajwa, 2011, p. 23). Additionally, the Punjabi proverbs are advisedly encouraging to keep away from 'bald criticism' even before a demonstrated blameworthy or criminal individual.) Contrarily, it is supported in the Yoruba corpus where the speakers are prompted not to be watchful and aberrant while reprimanding or pointing at the weaknesses of an individual.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, it can be declared that the proverbs of a culture are the windows through which researchers can build accepted rules (Arora, 1995). The data investigation of the Punjabi and African cultures helped the researchers to build up a set of accepted rules about the fitting standards and ideal cultural norms of

communication. The study uncovered the belief systems about the idea of speech encompassing certain do's and don'ts. It is established that both the linguo-cultures credited an incredible agency to 'speech' to make a paradise or damnation for the speaker. Furthermore, the fundamental attributes of 'longevity' and 'irascibility' connected with verbal expression are found in both cultures. Both languages laid a varied level of stress on utilizing sweet language followed by a recommendation to maintain a strategic distance from an ineffective talk, bringing about 'be careful' as the most focused counsel about talk. Although a significant number of Yoruba precepts are about the harmful intensity of abusive words, the contrastive investigation has uncovered the consolation offered to the suitable discourse, focusing on clearness, explicitness, and appropriacy of the moment, place and status. An Igbo proverb quoted by Opata (1992) has also reinforced the presence of positive attitude towards speech in the Nigerian cultures, "One who does not have his say when a charm is being prepared will have his mouth tied up in the charm" (p. 190). However, there may be several different positive and negative views of speech possible; the reason for evaluating speech one way or the other and the features of speech subject to evaluative concern may differ from one society to another. If this paper proves a stimulus to similar investigations of proverbs about speech in other cultures, we should be able to learn some answers to these questions. Further research can be done to seek for the prospective reasons for these similarities and differences found in the proverbs of two regionally distant cultures.

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